

MEALTIME, HAPPY TIME

Mealtimes are more pleasant when shared with others. Take the time out of your busy schedule to eat together and talk with your family. Include your preschooler in the family mealtime.

In this section, you will find...

- *Benefits of family mealtimes*
- *Tips for pleasant mealtimes*
- *Tips for picky eaters*
- *...and more!*



Benefits of Family Mealtimes

Eating together as a family is important. Read about the benefits of family mealtime below.

- Helps your child eat a variety of new foods.
- Provides a sharing time for your child.
- Helps the family grow closer together.
- Helps your child have a better food intake.
- Teaches your child to use good table manners.



Tips for Pleasant Mealtimes

What are some ideas for happy mealtime table talk? Try talking about these things with your family.

- Favorite foods
- Things you did today
- Plans for the week
- Favorite places to go
- What are your ideas for other things you can talk about with your preschooler/family?

Parents of Preschoolers (Three to Four Years)

Tips for Feeding the Picky Eater

Remember as your child grows older, his appetite slows down. Your child is not growing as fast. Since your child's appetite may change from day to day look at what your child eats over time, not just one day. Follow these tips for feeding picky eaters.

- Don't force your child to eat. But continue to offer new foods.
- Offer foods only at mealtime and snack time.
- You decide what foods are served. Your child will decide what and how much to eat.
- Let your child help you shop and prepare foods.
- Encourage active play every day to help give your child a good appetite.



More Tips for Mealtime, Happy Time

- Your preschooler will watch and learn from you. Eat together at the table. Turn off the TV!
- Children eat slower than adults. Allow your child plenty of time to eat.
- Have regular meals and snacks. Offer "child" size portions.
- Your preschooler thinks you are great! He needs to see you eating a food for him to learn to like it.
- Never force or bribe your child to eat. Offer new foods along with foods he or she likes. Do not allow begging for foods between meals.



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